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INTERNATIONAL MORALITY.

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OUR conception of nations is in a certain sense personal; that is to say they seem to have a sort of individuality of their own and in their dealings and behavior may be judged by a personal standard. But it is difficult to analyze the elements which go to make up the popular conception of one nation by another. The traditional symbolic figures used by cartoonists of all nationalities in their pictorial presentment of international events often become exaggerated into caricatures portraying national peculiarities in a rude and comic form, but they serve as a basis for the popular notion of the foreigner. Personal intercourse between travellers and foreign residents, historical knowledge which is comparatively rare, and scraps of foreign news occasionally appearing in the newspapers help to fill in the details and an undefinable and yet distinct conception of what is felt to be the personality of a nation is thus formed. Personal qualities are attributed to the mass which are not always identical with the qualities found to exist in individuals composing that mass. But this rough characterization, which is by no means without justification, will not carry anyone very far in the comprehension of foreign character. A traveller is struck not so much by the peculiarity of the people he visits for the first time as by their similarity to his own kith and kin. He feels, however, after a while, a difference of temperament, of perspective and of ideal, a subtle difference of character and method, which are more fundamental than the differences in appearance, manner, habit and customs. But what is a nation?

A nation is not in its composition primarily a geographical nor a racial, but a political unit. It may extend over an area which has no geographical unity, it may com-

prise several races, but it must be able to uphold its independent political sovereignty. Precise definitions, which in the case of individual relations or even in the case of the relations of small communities of people to one another are comparatively simple, become exceedingly complex in regard to nations. As civilization has advanced, usage, expediency and agreements, varying in character and scope, between one state and another, have gradually produced a set of regulations which govern international relations and are known as international law. Unlike other law, the sanction for international law is indeterminate, resting in the degree in which each state considers certain obligations binding in special and sometimes varying circumstances. There is no supreme authority as in ordinary law to insist on or enforce obedience from all nations to any precise code, but, in the main, there is a moral obligation to conform to to which no civilized state is insensible, though its interpretation of its duty may, as in the case of individuals, become modified by special ambitions. A moral sense rests in the state somewhere. The question is how can it be reached, in what way can it be influenced and stimulated, and how may it be made to respond to its equivalent in other states.

Like human beings, states differ widely in size and development. Restricted size by no means denotes inferiority or interferes with prosperity; on the contrary it can well be maintained that it materially assists it. Extended area, on the other hand, does not mean superiority, though it is frequently a matter for empty boasting. It chiefly signifies a much heavier weight of responsibility, which, in some cases, it may be found difficult to carry. Differences in development are more marked and more important than differences in size, because they signify various forms of government and therefore correspond to great differences in the truly representative character of those who speak for the nation. In a more or less autocratically-governed state, the nation's voice represents only the opinion of the sovereign and his advisers. In a more or

less democratically-governed state it is the opinion of a government nominated from elected representatives. Even in the latter case, however, for reasons which will be made clear later, the people's opinion carries little or no weight and exercises no influence. Yet, however unrepresentative Foreign Ministers may be, their intercourse is the intercourse of nations, their opinion is accepted as the national opinion, their decisions bind the whole nation for whom they speak.

Those who have been following the course of world politics during the last few years have been conscious of a great change in the relations between sovereign states. While outwardly the same conventions and methods of intercourse between nations have been followed as in previous centuries, and while international communication in the official world has continued more or less on the old lines, except for a greater centralization resulting from the introduction of the telegraph, there has been a marked and rapid development of intercourse socially, commercially, and financially among the peoples, a development of such a kind as to disclose more and more the inadequacy, and sometimes the positive inaccuracy, of the official voice as compared with the national sentiments. To put it in another way: Owing to the remarkable inventions and discoveries of the last half century, notably the rapidity of communication and transit, nations have been drawn closer to one another, the world has become smaller, international movements have grown, the common interests of labor have been recognized, financial bonds have become stronger and more complex, and mutual knowledge and sympathy among the peoples has steadily increased. But, side by side with this, there has been no change whatever in the methods of diplomacy or in the means adopted, even in the most democratically-governed countries, to make a nation articulate.

The protest against this growing inconsistency and want of sympathy between voice and sentiment has been feeble, and confined to the few who foresaw the dangers

that might arise from it. The peoples meanwhile—though by improved education increasingly capable of examining and pronouncing on matters of home politics—continued to be excluded from knowledge of foreign policy and from even a remote participation in its management. They accordingly take little or no interest in foreign affairs, though expressions of bewilderment and resentment escape them when rumors of war are circulated for no ostensible or conceivable reason of which they have any knowledge. Directly the dark cloud of actual war covers the whole sky; it is easy enough for each Government to tell its people whatever version it chooses of the cause and origin of the catastrophe, which each one in turn declares to be inevitable. In such circumstances, the people in their ignorance, and in the turmoil of impending calamity, will listen eagerly to the appeals of patriotism and concentrate their energies on the maintenance of national security, not concerning themselves with negotiations, conversations, treaties and ultimatums which they are quite unable to follow; indeed, any expression of opinion on their part generally serves to show how entirely in the dark they have been kept with regard to foreign politics, and how utterly incapable they are, owing to their enforced ignorance, of forming any judgment on the merits of international disputes. Yet, since the beginning of this century, the obvious advantages of peace, more especially from the economic and social point of view, had come to be more fully realized; the humanitarian arguments against war were beginning to be re-enforced by opinions founded on a more utilitarian and rationalistic basis, and the futility of war even more than its horrors was more generally recognized. But governments failed to respond; they failed to reflect or to take advantage of this awakening sentiment, and they never troubled to get the sanction and endorsement of public opinion for the line of policy they were pursuing. The great powers of Europe with an almost dogged determination began to prepare

for a conflict which need not have been inevitable, but which by their policy and action they made inevitable.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the Governments alone were warlike and the peoples were permeated by entirely pacific sentiments. It is, unfortunately, too true that the Chauvinist spirit is easily engendered, and where the lust for dominion, the worship of force, and the ignorant and aggressive spirit of Imperial ascendancy prevail, pure unadulterated Jingoism exists with all its sentimentality, and the flame can easily be fanned into a blaze by a judicious stirring of popular indignation. What governments have entirely failed to do is to smother the flame or stifle these dangerous sentiments; on the contrary, they know that they can depend on this spirit to infect a whole nation when they have chosen the moment to strike. In fact the tendency of the governing class is to preserve for use in emergencies the lowest passions of the most ignorant section of the population, and to deride the endeavors of the more enlightened to inculcate pacific notions into the public mind. War makes a selfish appeal, as the costly preparation for it actually pays some individuals in the purely financial sense; peace only pays the whole community in the long run. Therefore, as humanity is at present constituted, the former appeal will continue to be the stronger until the entire armaments business is placed under the sole control of the state. The pronounced growth of materialism in all classes within recent years has assisted very considerably in fostering the belief in gain by conquest, and has retarded the more idealistic belief in progress through peace. Thus it was that in the course of a week a series of diplomatic disputes was sufficient to plunge the whole of Europe into the most devastating war the world has ever seen. The actual quarrel between a few ministers, diplomats and monarchs was not the initial cause of war. It was the match struck in the powder magazine. The powder had been stored years before; secret diplomacy had committed each country to a certain perilous line of policy; the armaments competition had

been carried on in direct defiance of the wisest opinion even of statesmen, and war became inevitable long before the diplomats began to quarrel. In any case the peoples had no voice whatever either in the scattering of the gunpowder or the striking of the match. None of the decisions had their approval; the policy, as in all such cases, was presented to them as a *fait accompli*.

The crucial question is whether the arbitrament of arms is the only method of attempting to settle acute differences. Is periodic war in fact inevitable? Whatever policy nations may adopt, will the evil passions of mankind in the mass always have to find vent until mankind as a whole has gone through a process of regeneration—that is until the millennium? Or can we set aside the fatalistic doctrine of inevitability, and, by allowing the improved state of feeling between peoples directly to influence governments, create in the course of time a new international usage of compulsory arbitration and mediation for the real settlement of disputes, and divert national energy into channels where it can operate against the truly destructive elements in the social life of each nation? Unfortunately, while the generation that experiences war and has immediate knowledge of its horrors and also of its futility is ready to learn a lesson, the succeeding generations have war presented to them in a historical setting bereft of its poignant and cruel reality, and they are accordingly far more acquiescent in its recurrence than their fathers would be in their place. Thus war successfully makes its appeal afresh to the lowest passions of each succeeding generation.

There is no doubt a combative instinct in man. In the old racial feuds in barbaric times it was the prevailing instinct. Later on it became harnessed and organized by sovereigns in their dynastic wars. Ambitious statesmen and monarchs and unscrupulous governments, knowing the strength of the emotional appeal of war, are still able to count on this instinct to further their ends, though racial animosities have been very much reduced as the attention of the democracies becomes more and more

occupied with industrial and economic problems at home which immediately concern them. The masses, although they are more articulate and self-conscious than formerly, are still handicapped by another instinct. This is the class instinct of subservience and obedience to their social superiors, and it is so deeply engrained that they can be easily disciplined and readily obey, more especially in countries where conscription exists. It is true then that it would take many centuries to strengthen as well as educate the mass of the people. But how about governments? Is it possible to influence them and persuade them that murder and pillage, on however large scale it may be undertaken, will not, in national life any more than in individual life, solve disputes or remedy injustice?

A very important factor to be taken into account in this connection is the traditional ambition of a nation, for it is on this that its foreign policy is founded. It may be territorial aggrandizement, it may be commercial expansion, it may be consolidation, it may simply be self-defence. But it matters a great deal what particular form the national ideal takes. To ignore this, and to formulate abstract principles on which nations ought to act, is to court failure in any attempt to adjust international relations on anything like a permanently satisfactory basis. National ambitions seldom now take a merely dynastic form. Reigning families inherit certain traditions from the middle ages when the state was the private hereditary possession of the sovereign; and from these traditions, in many cases, a national policy is evolved. The main difference between the present and the past in this respect is that autocracy is gradually being superseded by democracy and that internal development is now generally understood to be more vitally important than any extra territorial acquisitions. Sometimes, however, the two are to some extent interdependent. A growing population may develop commercial ambitions which seem to necessitate expansion, and the trouble comes when between two or more states there is a clash or conflict inevitable in the achievement of the ob-

jects they have in view. Even this, however, would seem to be capable of adjustment by diplomatic means and capable of a settlement far more likely to be permanent than any settlement arrived at in consequence of war. Indeed the most serious argument against war is that it does not settle any dispute, but creates many new ones, which become the seeds of future wars. The conflicting ambitions, however, when left in the hands of a very small governing class and manipulated by them secretly, increase in intensity and are the real cause of trouble. As these ambitions cannot be altered, except in the course of time, there is a strong reason for a drastic change in the character and methods in each country of the authority which acts as the intermediary and claims to be the nation's voice.

Very few people know anything at all of how nations speak to one another; they do not understand that they are in constant communication, often of a confidential or secret character, and that their serious quarrels seldom arise from the correspondence of a few weeks which is eventually published to the world, but on the outcome of a diplomatic attitude adopted over a course of years. The diplomatic service in most countries is composed of men who have to be well off in order that one stratum, and that the upper social stratum, may alone be the class represented. They are kept abroad from an early age and grow entirely out of touch with the changes in sentiment or the new progressive movements in their own country. Diplomacy is an intricate game, nations are the pieces, secrecy and intrigue is part and parcel of the business. The foreign minister in one capital converses with the ambassador of a certain power; the foreign minister of that power converses with the other ambassador in the other capital. There is therefore a double method of communication. The two do not always tally, which is the cause not infrequently of grave confusion—a confusion which is by no means dispelled when the monarchs interfere and start a correspondence of their own. The whole system with its utterly out of date machinery, its absurd secrecy and intrigue, its

burlesque customs and pompous ceremonies, is calculated to produce the maximum amount of friction and of misunderstandings. The tone, the temper, the manner of the various representatives, though entirely unimportant matters, in reality are often the determining factor in the success or failure of negotiations. A slighting word or tactless phrase from the lips of an ambassador to a foreign minister constitutes an insult from one whole nation, government and people to another whole nation. All this intercommunication can be concealed from the parliaments and people, who are only told just so much as is supposed to be good for them to know, and when statements are occasionally vouchsafed, it is often more with a view to mystification than elucidation. Until this antique method is changed, and as long as the game continues to be played only by a few of the governing class, it will constitute a perpetual source of danger. No doubt a certain amount of secrecy is essential. The people do not ask their so-called representatives to show their cards while play is proceeding, but they do demand and rightly demand that they should be told what game is being played, inasmuch as it is they in the long run who have to pay the heavy stakes.

Intercourse among people of different nations can be and is carried on without friction and with due regard to the promotion of a common object. Scientific research, discovery and invention, have progressed by leaps and bounds chiefly on account of international co-operation; the friendly rivalry produced by the closer interdependence of commerce has all been to the world's advantage. Latterly, too, the interests of labor have gradually become internationalized, this fundamental common interest being obviously more important than superficial national differences. The extended movement may almost have been strangled in its infancy by recent events, but it will probably revive all the stronger from the shock. Why then is it impossible for political activities to be co-ordinated and dealt with for the common benefit? It is not impossible, it is only more difficult, and as yet nothing worth calling a

serious attempt to bring the nations of the world together has been made.

It is the European family whose discords and traditional differences are the most disturbing elements to the world's peace. Africa suffers from the ambitions of Europe; Asia from her example. In Spanish America the states are hampered by constant internal dissension. North America alone is sufficiently fortunately situated to pursue an internal progressive development based on a more lasting peace. But war now is not a matter of struggle between two combatants; we see that it draws in one power after another until a whole continent, and indeed the whole world, is directly or indirectly involved. The problem before us in the future, therefore, is practically world-wide. If the European war of 1914 is accepted as the negation of the existence of international morality, as an exposure of the utter failure of all the efforts of pacifists, as a vindication of the militarist policy and the justification of force, as another proof of the ineradicable passion of humanity for conflict, and as the only ultimate method of settling international differences, then counsel is useless, no foresight for the future need be taken, and we can repeat with Von Bernhardt that "war is a great civilizing influence," "a biological necessity of the first importance that cannot be dispensed with" and that "efforts to secure peace are extraordinarily detrimental to the national health." If, on the other hand, we believe that the European war of 1914 will produce a shock so profound and so shattering that not one nation or another but humanity as a whole will be stirred to its depths to make renewed efforts to liberate the latent moral sense in each nation, to insist that it shall be more adequately expressed in future, and to demand from governments an absolute guarantee and safeguard against the recurrence of so hideous a catastrophe—then thoughtful men must not remain with folded hands waiting to see how matters will shape themselves and what sort of fresh dispute is to arise, but they must lay down certain broad principles for the guidance of policy in the

future and for the establishment of international justice. It is, however, as well to see beforehand what are the obstacles to be overcome in the desired realization, not of an Utopian ideal, but of a marked improvement, which in its advance must be commensurate in the progressive direction with the war in its bound towards the depths of reaction.

In addition to the antiquated methods of diplomacy referred to above, in addition to the want of enlightenment among a large section of the people, in addition to the reverence for the martial spirit which exists in a justifiable form when based on pride in military achievements and the glories of the past and also in a contemptible form in mere outbursts of Jingoism, there is the far more complex problem caused by national ambition, which has already been noted, and which ought to be examined in conjunction with the characteristics of the people, not only from the general point of view of all, but from the particular point of view of each state. In doing so briefly, it will be well to avoid particulars which may lead to disputed ground, I shall confine myself to those generalities which form the underlying motive of policy.

Great Britain, for instance, has no desire to extend its territory. The responsibility of a world-wide Empire is already a burden very difficult to bear. But considering its island position, and in order to consolidate this extended Empire, the command of the sea is very naturally felt to be a vital necessity. The policy of expansion is a thing of the past, and it is sometimes forgotten when the motives of other nations are being judged, that we, ourselves, were in our day aggressive and set the example of modern Empire building. But to-day consolidation, both at home and in the dominions, is the only sound foundation of policy. France, too, has colonies and has been increasing its territory, but its desire for expansion is not aggressive. The lesson of the Napoleonic wars has taught the French people the fatal results of exaggerated aggrandizement. But France has a rankling resentment at having been driven

from provinces that it regarded as part of its own soil. This grievance, the outcome of the war of 1870, has been nursed with increasing rather than diminishing bitterness, and it has constituted one of the great European perils—a festering sore that has never healed. The policy of the German Empire has been an increasing desire for expansion, based on the militarism by which the Empire was created; its central position in Europe has engendered in the people a fear of attack from either side, while its marked commercial progress demanded wider scope in colonial enterprise. Austrian policy also has been one of expansion, which has been aggressively directed towards the Balkan peninsula; while Serbia, encouraged by recent successes, has looked forward to an extension of territory at Austria's expense and counted on the internal racial troubles in the Austrian Empire to further its cause. In Europe, Italy desires only the recovery of lost territory but colonial ambitions in Africa led her into a provocative move against Turkey. The latter, in its stages of decay, gradually driven out of its European dominions and thereby attracting in desperate rivalry the other Balkan states, has by its break-up caused the most complex and perilous problems in which all the great Powers have become directly interested. Russia, still under a primitive form of autocracy, has consistently followed, since the days of Peter the Great, a policy of aggrandizement, not the expansion which becomes imperative for a thriving industrial community, nor the expansion of colonial enterprise, but the immediate enlargement of its own frontiers; and Russian success in the pursuit of this aim has been remarkable, but alarming. The smaller states of Western Europe have asked for nothing but to be left alone in peace, and several of them, in consequence of being able to devote their attention primarily and almost exclusively to the welfare of their own people, have set examples of good government and prosperity which the greater powers, whose greatness consisted of mere size and wealth, have been unable to follow. But they are largely at the mercy of the great

powers, and their reasonable demand is that their integrity, their independence and their neutrality may be respected. Outside Europe, Japan, aping the Western powers in the worship of and confidence in force, has turned herself into a military power with aggressive ambitions. While in the vast area of China, if any national desire could be formulated, it would be that the Empire should be protected from the exploitations of the Western powers. The United States of America, fortunate in being freed from European entanglements, has in its vast continent problems enough to occupy its attention. The Atlantic like the rest of the world having become smaller, the designs of European nations, so many of whose subjects have found homes in America, have to be vigilantly watched. If the command of the sea fell into the hands of a power with hostile intentions towards the Western Continent, the United States would find itself drawn into the European system, and an attitude of non-intervention and aloofness would no longer be tenable.

Where then do the danger points lie? Neither between Western and Orientals, Anglo-Saxons and Latins, Teutons and Slavs is the racial hatred so deeply rooted in the minds of the peoples as to constitute a constant menace to the world's peace. Primitive racial animosity may therefore be practically set aside as a prime cause of war. It is in the political ambitions of the governments of each of the states that differences and disputes must arise. Aggressive desire for expansion must beget dangerous jealousy and rivalry. No one nation can profit in this direction except at the expense of another nation. The partition of dying or decaying countries forms the greatest temptation. The wars that ensue, giving to the nation which at the time happens to be best equipped in armaments an unfair advantage, so far from settling the controversy leave only a resented humiliation and desire for revenge. One war leads to another and one generation bequeaths a legacy of critical problems for the next to wrangle over. One nation

follows another in usurping for a time a preponderating domination based on force and material aggrandizement.

Even governments, it must be acknowledged, unless they consider their interests threatened, do not desire war. But in the less democratically-governed states, there are powerful sections outside direct governmental control which wield considerable, and, sometimes, supreme power. Various policies and diplomatic formulæ are devised from time to time for the adjustment of possible differences. In minor concerns recourse is had more frequently to arbitration. But the expenditure of their best resources on armaments amounts to a declaration on the part of governments that in certain eventualities they expect and count upon the failure of diplomatic methods. It is only the very foolish who can be made to believe that the best way to maintain peace is to prepare for war. War preparations are made for fighting, in the belief that where arbitration or diplomacy fails, carnage will succeed.

In Europe two policies have been adopted from time to time by the great Powers in their international relations: Alliances leading to an attempt to equalize rival forces or maintaining what is known as the Balance of Power; by mutual co-operation by the formation of a European Concert. The first of these was brought forward on many occasions during the nineteenth century as an excuse for alliances and hostile action, and has again found favor in recent years in the Chancelleries of Europe, more especially in the British Foreign Office. The idea is to counterbalance the threatening supremacy of one group or combination of powers by forming another group to prevent that supremacy from becoming an accomplished fact. This may seem plausible on the surface, and the word "balance" has a judicial and almost impartial sound about it. The word, however, is quite inaccurate, for the simple reason that the attainment of equipoise is an impossibility, and what is aimed at, therefore, is not balance at all but preponderance. The two groups eye one another with suspicion, the smallest point of difference becomes a matter of

bargain and consequent tension. Rival claims are warmly contested, understandings are concluded in secret between the members of the same group. Any attempt at expansion by a great power on one side is immediately regarded as a hostile act by the rival group. Any possibility of improved relations between powers in the opposing camps is made too difficult ever to be successful. Peacefully inclined powers become tied to powers whose position may be precarious and whose inclinations may be bellicose. John Bright's denunciation of this policy in 1864 is worth quoting:

“You cannot comprehend at a thought what is meant by the Balance of Power. If the record could be brought before you—but it is not possible to the eye of humanity to scan the scroll upon which are recorded the sufferings which the theory of the Balance of Power has entailed upon this country. It rises up before me when I think of it as a ghastly phantom which during one hundred and seventy years, whilst it has been worshipped in this country, has loaded the nation with debt and with taxes, has sacrificed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Englishmen, has desolated the homes of millions of families, and has left us, as the great result of the profligate expenditure it has caused, a doubled peerage at one end of the social scale, and far more than a doubled pauperism at the other. I am very glad to be here to-night, amongst other things, to be able to say that we may rejoice that this foul idol—fouler than any heathen tribe ever worshipped—has at last been thrown down, and that there is one superstition less which has its hold upon the minds of English statesmen and of the English people.”

But the superstition was revived and its mischievous consequences are only too tragically apparent to-day. The two groups once constituted must arm against one another. A keen competition begins in the preparation of munitions of war and the invention of engines of destruction. The best resources of the nations are drawn upon; weaker and poorer states following the example of others

are reduced to a practical condition of bankruptcy; armament firms with their directors and investors make huge profits and encourage with all the great influence they have at their command, in the press and elsewhere, the doctrine on which they thrive. The idea of war is popularized, the possibility of war is accepted, the imminence of war is welcomed and the actual advent of war is hastened. Within the last decade fleets and armies have been equipped at great cost. Every year the naval and military estimates of the powers have risen by leaps and bounds. The people have been heavily taxed, and social and domestic reforms have been delayed, and in some countries prevented, until at last Europe was spending something like six hundred millions a year on armaments. Meanwhile the people were hoodwinked by being told that all this was entirely for "national defence"; but some saw clearly enough that it was the preliminary to national ruin and to the overthrow of civilization by a return to barbarism. But no one government was able to stop so long as others went on. Each took refuge in the excuse that nothing could prevent it and nothing could be done, and no endeavor was made by any one of them to check the headlong rush into hideous disaster. Agreement, indeed, was rendered practically impossible while the powers were divided into two hostile groups.

There can be no question now that as a means of maintaining European peace nothing could be better calculated to lead to complete and absolute failure than the policy of the Balance of Power. Events have proved that those who had sufficient foresight to expect disastrous results from the pursuit of this policy have, unfortunately, been fully justified. Once a Triple entente was formed to counterbalance the Triple alliance, it did not require any very great acumen or imagination to anticipate an early conflict. A superficial notion gains favor that the military domination of one power can be crushed by the military action of another power. Whereas any attempt to crush from outside the military domination and the

militarist spirit of one nation has the inevitable effect of creating these evils in some other nation. The scourge of militarism can only be cured from within.

The alternative policy to the Balance is that which is known as the Concert of Europe. That is to say the formation of no definite alliances or special compacts between groups of powers, but the freedom of all in ordinary circumstances and the co-operation of all in special circumstances. The Concert has its disadvantages. It cannot act rapidly; and to obtain unanimity, its action must be at times negative rather than positive. But no danger whatever attends it, and the very fact of its existence is in itself a guarantee for the maintenance of peace. The policy of Concert was momentarily revived in place of the policy of Balance during the Balkan war, when there was far more cause for a general European conflagration than there was from the isolated event of the Sarajevo assassinations. Conflict between the powers of Europe was successfully avoided, though it is true that nothing effective could be done to prevent the Balkan States from fighting it out. But this was momentary. Balance held the field; it was revived, and its rich harvest of death, destruction and desolation is now being reaped. Every thinking man with the hideous facts before him to-day is anyhow determined that no statesman in the future shall be allowed to revive the policy of the Balance of Power.

If the idea of the waging of war just for war's sake is only held by a negligible body of opinion in civilized countries—most people regarding it as a very regrettable necessity—and if the inevitability of war can be rationally disproved, surely it is not beyond human power to devise means for preventing what experience has now so often shown to be the failure of the diplomatic method in the conduct of critical negotiations. Taking as a basis the policy of concerted action and discarding for good and all the policy of special friendships, secret entanglements, of alliances and of balance, practical machinery has still to be devised to cope with the various dilemmas as they arise. Opportu-

nities for arbitration have undoubtedly increased, and many dangerous moments of friction, that in years gone by would have constituted sufficient ground for the outbreak of hostilities, have been tided over. But recent events show that circumstances may still arise in which the momentum caused by precipitate action on the part of one or more nations is irresistible. Calling the Concert of Europe into being is too long a process to be effective when rapid decisions are necessary and delay would be fatal. But since in every capital all the powers are represented permanently, an easier way presents itself if the policy of co-operation is once accepted. It would be possible, for instance, for the powers to decide forthwith at which capital the central deliberations should be held, and the accredited representatives in that capital would at once convert themselves into a conference. This method indeed was adopted in London during the Balkan war. It ought, however, to be permanently accepted as the recognized machinery coming automatically into action to deal with questions of difference between European powers as and when they appear on the diplomatic horizon. The only decision to be taken at the moment is the choice of the capital, which should not be the capital of any of the countries party to the dispute. Without any other preliminaries whatever, this decision can be made by telegraph in the course of a few hours, and once the conference is set up, most of the overlapping, repetition, cross purposes, inconsistencies and misunderstandings, which so often lead to confusion under the present method, would be avoided. Supplement this with the fact that diplomatic representatives would be men chosen on their merits from the people at large, and with the further still more important change that, while they would be plenipotentiaries, the lines of their policy would have the sanction and their decisions the ratification of their respective Parliaments, and you have an infinitely more satisfactory method of arriving at conclusions of lasting value, based on real consent and respect for national feeling. A faithful representation of the people's views is

more difficult in countries where the sovereign's personal rule still exists. But it is not unlikely that one of the results of a war of unprecedented magnitude will be a further broadening of the democratic principle in those governments which are still encumbered with the relics of autocratic and aristocratic rule.

Such a reconstruction of diplomatic methods, as described above, might eventually lead to the constitution of a European Council. But it is no good looking too far ahead, and it would seem in some ways that diplomatists in close contact with the every-day routine of international affairs were better adapted to deal with special questions which suddenly crop up than any outside delegates, however eminent, who are kept aloof from the usual intercourse which is proceeding between nations in ordinary times. In all this, co-operation, mutual assistance, identity of aim, common action, concerted deliberation is the indispensable foundation. And it is surely no fanciful dream to expect that the strong inclination of the people of Europe, when the lessons of the present war have been brought home, will be turned in this direction. On the termination of hostilities the first immediate steps will be the calling together of an International Congress. It will at once be necessary therefore to prevent the old evils from being perpetuated, to ensure that decisions are not come to by diplomatists behind the backs of the people and that anyhow so far as Great Britain is concerned the settlement is one that has full democratic sanction.

Certain it is that the best opinion in every country will now demand some sort of safeguard against the stupendous sacrifice which war under modern conditions demands. Those who can turn their minds at the earliest possible moment to future international policy are not indulging in vague speculation, but are helping to guide public opinion, and so influence governments in their future action. The problems are vaster than any which have presented themselves to the human mind in time past, but some of the remedies are fairly obvious. Unfortunately, after the

emotions of war have passed away, recriminations and the apportionment of blame occupy too much attention. But the peoples, if not the governments, should have the good sense to waste no time in this way, but merely use the past as a warning which may prevent them from being led into such perilous paths in time to come. The moral sense of nations must be made articulate and must be fortified. Some progress, proportionate to the improvement in individual morality, must be gained in international morality.

Even if international morality is different from individual morality, the difference is one of degree, not of quality, because it is founded on the moral sense of a body of individuals, and, in proportion as that moral sense progresses and develops in the process of civilization, the corporate morality must in turn progress, more slowly, perhaps, owing to the difficulty of its finding proper means of expressing itself. Nations no more than individuals need expect to escape the inevitable retribution which follows the infringement of the moral law. But their code is, comparatively speaking, elementary and far more primitive than it need be. Cannot magnanimity, generosity and even sacrifice and renunciation figure more openly in a nation's dealings? Cannot statesmen introduce into their public conduct as spokesmen of their respective nations the same ethical values as they are ready to recognize in their private affairs? No doubt this is too much to expect in war time, when each nation genuinely believes itself to be right. While nations are actually at war, the tendency of each belligerent is to believe in its own superiority and in the providential character of its special civilizing mission, for which the Divine aid is invoked; the refusal of either party to tolerate any view of justice but its own (which means no interference with its own interests); and the determination to put the entire blame on the enemy, who must be humiliated at all costs; in the midst of these forces ethical values must perhaps be inevitably forgotten. But even in peace time selfishness, international suspicion and cynical disregard of the claims of other countries figure too

largely. In the case of individuals this arrogance, self-righteousness and self-complacency would be intolerable. But we may comfort ourselves with the fact that often in existing conditions it is not the real national feeling that is expressed. Anyhow a saner conception of patriotism, a higher moral tone, a larger sympathy, a more intelligent considerateness, will, we may confidently hope, find a place in the intercourse between nations in the future. It is also essential that those responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs in each country should not rest satisfied with mere political and diplomatic knowledge of foreign countries, they must cease observing the world through official spectacles, which exclude some of the most important considerations from their focus, and they must be endowed with sufficient imagination to understand that nations are not inanimate pawns, but aggregates of sentient beings. A more intimate knowledge of foreign national character and a fuller comprehension of the temperament, the ideals and the aspirations of other peoples must be part of their equipment. Then the policy they advocate will have the advantage of being based on vital practical realities instead of on unreal artificial theories. The peculiarities and special characteristics of nationality are enduring, and their preservation is an appreciable and very valuable asset in the progress of civilization. The principle of nationality must everywhere be respected; but the common intelligence, the common moral sense and the common humanity which is inherent in all must be allowed to dominate over the human weaknesses and petty differences which too often lead to conflict. The great impulses which unite are far finer and more creditable than the small prejudices which separate. Pride of race need not degenerate into arrogance, national sentiment need not deteriorate into selfishness, legitimate patriotism does not mean conceit. States in time to come will develop a more intelligent conception, not only of their own rights and liberties, but of their duties and obligations in the family of nations.

Too few people have turned their thoughts to the examination of these larger problems, deterred, no doubt, as they have been by the vast dimensions and extreme complexity of the questions at issue. But in the near future many more will be asking questions and seeking information as to matters which have been kept from them, and in which they hardly realized that they were even remotely concerned. There is no need for despair even in the darkest moment, when great ideals are shattered and confident hopes have proved vain. The triumph of the disciples of force and the champions of might, though clamorous, is short-lived. Safeguards against the disaster which comes from ignorance, vainglory and unscrupulous ambition will certainly be discovered. And those who will take the trouble to think, exercise their imagination, and make the effort to lift their thoughts from out of the old ruts of past usage, tradition, outworn customs and fallacies, and the discredited doctrines of inevitability—the refuge of lazy minds—can one and all contribute to the establishment of a new order of things, a new European system, a new sense of responsibility and a new moral susceptibility among the nations of the world. They will learn that reconciliation is more valuable than victory.

Diplomacy has failed, its method is wrong, the policy on which it is based is discredited. The argument of might has triumphed for the moment, but when its certain failure comes, every nerve must be strained by right-thinking men and women throughout the world to combat the forces of reaction and prevent the lower instincts of the herd prevailing again over the more enlightened opinion which is to be found in the heart of every civilized country.

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